



ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Snape Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

1.2 The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

1.3 The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the committee know of the policy and have access to it.

2. School's roles and responsibilities

2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Snape Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

2.2 Office Manager

Part of the office manager's work is to co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and, with the support of the whole school ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. Up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared regularly as part of our regular safeguarding updates. This ensures that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties. Our attendance officer visits regularly but is contacted swiftly if a concern needs immediate attention.

2.3 Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Class teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes. Class teachers will mark the registers during the registration period in respect of each child.

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REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

i) The register will be called promptly at the following times:

9.00 am for all pupils

1.05 pm for all pupils

ii) The registers will close at the following times

9.10 am for all pupils

1.15 pm for all pupils

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iii) Any pupil who arrives during the registration 'window' will be marked in the register as an L. This is counted as a present mark and will not affect the overall attendance levels, however will be dealt with under the school's policy on punctuality and lateness (see para 4.4 on page 6).

Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will be coded with a U and this is counted as an **absent**. This could result in the school making a referral to the local authority and further action taken.

2.4 Categorising absence

i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked with an O. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, an absence code will be added to the register. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Attendance Leader and/or headteacher.

ii) Snape Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Snape Primary School will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. It is the school's decision to authorise.

iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 2 school weeks**, the absence will remain unauthorised;

iv) Absence will be considered to be authorised in the following circumstances:

(a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example –

- a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
- a pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's / student's overall pattern of attendance will be considered,
 - in **exceptional** circumstance e.g for a leave of absence; or family bereavement) and **for a limited period**.

(b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

(c) where the pupil has a medical appointment and, in some cases, evidence has been seen by the school. (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand;

(d) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;

v) Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, eg a birthday;
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;
- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.

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2.5 Approved educational activity

Where a pupil is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

2.6 Staff Training

The School Attendance Leader will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receives sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. **Collection and analysis of data**

3.1 The Office Manager will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team; parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

3.2 Attendance is monitored by class.

3.3 Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfES within the stipulated time frame.

4. **Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance**

4.1 Attendance has a high profile at Snape Primary School. 100% termly attendance (and 100% attendance for the year) is celebrated in assembly with a special pencil and names go on the last day of term's newsletter.

We aim for 95%+ attendance at all times. Attendance is reported to the GB via the termly HT's report.

4.2 First-day calling

Snape Primary School has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on each day of absences when contact has not already been made by the parent/carer to establish a reason for the absence. **It is the expectation of all parents/carers to make contact with school daily to inform them if their child will be present in school.** This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who may start to have attendance issues and will also help to safeguard the pupils.

4.3 Meetings with parents

Any concerns about punctuality or attendance are raised with our attendance officer. If it is necessary the Attendance officer will send a notice of poor attendance, request a meeting or speak to a family via phone.

4.4 Penalty Notices

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23 empowers designated Local Authority (LA) Officers, Headteachers (and Deputy and Assistant Headteachers authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. Snape follows the Local Authority's Penalty Notice Protocol, working in conjunction with the Education Welfare Officer. A Penalty Notice referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Officer when a pupil has more than 9 sessions unauthorised in any academic year.

4.5 Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil / student to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes.

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A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Attendance Service.

4.6 If pupils arrive late for school parents are asked to complete the late form and give the reason for lateness. The office manager will then transfer this information over to the SIMS system which is used to track school attendance.

4.7 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. **Children arriving late need to be taken to the school office at the front of the school to be signed in as the back is locked when the register is opened.**

4.8 For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment, for which school may ask for supporting evidence), or returning to school later in the day are signed out/in.

5. Request for Leave of Absence

5.1 Snape Primary School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence at the Heads discretion. Parents need to obtain a leave of absence form from the school office.

5.2 Snape Primary School will NOT authorise a leave of absence during periods of national tests, ie SATS.

6. Parents' / carers' responsibilities

6.1 The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Snape Primary School.

6.2 Snape Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

6.3 Parents will also be expected to:

- notify Snape Primary School on every day of absence by telephoning the office.
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. Snape Primary School will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

7. Pupils' responsibilities

7.1 All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance.

7.2 A Guide for Pupils is attached.

8. Governors' responsibilities

Section 175 (2)

The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Regular school attendance is a necessary contributor to your child's enjoyment and success at school:

Be healthy–

- attendance at school supports children's emotional and social health and development
- the school curriculum teaches children to be healthy

Stay safe –

- schools and the LA have a statutory duty to promote the safety and welfare of children
- the best way to safeguard children is to ensure they attend school regularly

Enjoy and achieve –

- good school attendance supports children in reaching their maximum potential and enjoying the fulfilment this brings

Make a positive contribution –

- membership of a school community builds confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute to and be responsible for the well-being of others.

Achieve economic well-being –

- good school attendance supports engagement in further education, employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling life-style



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **9.00 am** and the afternoon register at **1.05pm**

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at **9.10 am** in the morning and **1.15pm** in the afternoon.

If your child arrives between **9.00am** and **9.10am** he/she will be marked **late**.

If your child arrives after **9.10am** he/she will be marked **unauthorised late**.

If your child arrives between **1.05pm** and **1.15pm** he/she will be marked **late**.

If your child arrives after **1.15pm** he/she will be marked **unauthorised late**.

(Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office. If a pupil is late on 5 or more occasions you will be asked to attend a meeting with the headteacher to discuss reasons / difficulties for lateness.)

3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on each day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, if the explanation is unsatisfactory or if your child has a pattern of poor attendance, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

in such circumstances, for future absences the school may request a dr's note and proof of medical appointments.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness (48 hours for a sickness bug. If your child has been sick for any other reason, they can return to school before then)
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays) Supportive evidence may be asked to be seen
- The child is absent for a day of religious observance in the parents' religion.
- Family bereavement – each case will be assessed individually

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school by completing the leave of absence form well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical evidence.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absences once a pupil attendance has dipped to 95% or less, unless there is supportive evidence, but also on the discretion of the headteacher.

Parental illness or parental/sibling hospital appointments are not acceptable reasons for absence and will not be authorised

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters, etc.

It will also be deemed unacceptable if there is pattern/regular occurrence of absences on the same day ie Monday or Friday.



6. Will the School contact me if my child is absent?

The school will contact you if your child is absent and you have not made contact with the school. The school also monitors attendance closely and will send out letters where there are concerns to see what can be put in place.

7. What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his / her education. If you have any concerns please come into school and ask to speak with a member of staff.

8. My child is trying to avoid coming to School. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise.



A GUIDE FOR PUPILS

1. Attending regularly and on time

Regular attendance will help you make the most of the opportunities at Snape Primary School. It will help you:

- learn, grow and be part of our Snape family without missing out
- be the best you can be;
- get a job in later life - employers like people who are reliable.

Remember, your attendance at school is shown on your Report

2. Absences

Acceptable reasons for absences include

- illness - 48 hours if you have had a sickness bug
- emergency dental / medical appointments (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- day of religious observance
- family bereavement

Looking after brothers and sisters, birthdays, general trips such as shopping and helping at those are NOT reasons to be absent from school.

You will also need a note from your parents to explain ALL absences from school if your parents or carers do not phone the school. If the school does not receive a telephone call or you do not bring a note, or the explanation on the note is unsatisfactory, the absence will count as unauthorised and will be shown on your end of year report.

3. Need help?

Problems with your school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at school? Are things difficult at home?

You may feel that missing school is the answer. It is not - it may even make things worse. **TALK TO SOMEONE** - your class teacher, another member of staff or your parents/carer. We will do everything we can to help you get over the problem.